A study carried out by the Services on the issue has recommended that women officers be excluded from induction in close combat Arms where chances of physical contact with enemy are high. The study has concluded that it is essential to obtain feed back on their performance based on revised pre-commission training (from 24 weeks to 49 weeks), detailment on courses such as junior command course and assessment of their performance as sub unit commanders especially in field areas; for holding higher ranks and grant of Permanent Commission. In the light of the above, grant of Permanent Commission to women has not been recommended presently.

Revamping of EPF networking and digitalisation project

* 110. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the project, launched almost seven years ago to provide access to members of Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) through networking and digitalisation of more than 110 EPF offices, is to be revamped;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether the EPFO Board of Trustees has taken a decision to re-launch this much delayed project and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) to (c) The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation launched a programme called 'Re-Inventing EPF India' in the year 2001, which envisaged total revamp of the processes and procedures. ,

The application software developed by the consultants was given in the year 2006-07. On testing, the software was found to be inadequate to meet the requirements, thus, necessitating considerable improvements.

To set right the deficiencies, the consultants had asked for changes in the contract apart from financial compensation. The Central Board of Trustees, Employees' Provident Fund considered the issue and gave directions to explore alternate options. Accordingly, the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation has sought assistance from the National Informatics Centre (NIC), Ministry of Communications & Information Technology in implementing the project.

Threat on Naxalism to internal security

*111. DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that naxalism is the biggest threat to internal security;

(b) whether it is a fact that the forested regions of Chhartisgarh, Jharkhand, Telangana and Vidarbha are the main centres of relatively successful Maoist activity;

(c) whether the absence of sufficient public intervention specially in Education, Health and Employment has allowed non-State factors to push their agenda among the tribals; and